

there was an appropriation bill introduced, as Senator Nelson has indicated, to appropriate 200,000 for this purpose and it was...the separate bill was not advanced by the committee nor was it included as an amendment to the bill. I merely would stand to indicate, as is true of a whole host of requests that came in, many of them have a great deal of merit. At some point, you do not, just do not feel that you can add some other things to the level of funding that is already proposed. That doesn't take away from the merit of those proposals particularly but there are those hard choices that we have to make. In this case, there is a program in place. I think some of us looked upon this as an expansion that probably more appropriately should be looked at at the beginning of a biennial budget rather than in the middle, and, for those reasons, we did not advance the bill for separate funding of this particular program. I suspect it has good potential for growth. At least, I had a feeling that we needed a better assessment of what growth it may have before we start providing significant General Fund money to assist in the program. This is not to take away from the program, but it is, at least, my explanation as to why it was not included and I would be reluctant to vote to add those funds at this point.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Ashford, please. May I introduced some guests that are just coming into the north balcony, guests of Senator Carson Rogers. They are from Centura Public Schools, 49 eighth graders, with their sponsors. That is a consolidated school at Boelus, Dannebrog and Cairo. Would you please welcome these guests to the Legislature. Thank you for visiting us today. Senator Ashford, please, then Senator Nelson.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I would like to also rise and urge your support for Senator Nelson's amendment, for many of the same reasons that Senator Chambers gave, and I am not going to belabor them, but I think sometimes in this body because we, obviously, have to talk sometimes in broad generalities and philosophies and we miss sometimes the point about what it is really like in the trenches, and I think that in this area is one of the areas where we sometimes do miss it. It is rough out there. It is rough out there for those people who have to rely upon state services for support, and it is rough out there for those who, in this case, who are illiterate and cannot read, and again I relate a story that was brought to me by a constituent who is an ADC recipient, who is